

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 DHA-02 NEA-10 SCA-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 BIB-01 /089 W

----- 109228

R 121515Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6692

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16307

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UNGA, SHUM, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET JEWS AND THE UN ZIONISM DECLARATION

1. SEVERAL SOVIET JEWISH DISSIDENT SOURCES HAVE COMMENTED TO US ON THEIR CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON THEIR PRESENT STATUS AND FUTURE HOPES OF THE PASSAGE OF THE UNGA RESOLUTION EQUATING ZIONISM WITH RACISM. OUR SOURCES FEEL THAT THERE WILL BE TWO LIKELY AREAS IN WHICH PASSAGE OF THE RESOLUTION WILL COMPLICATE MATTERS. FIRST, ANTI-SEMITIC ELEMENTS IN THE SOVIET BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE MAY FEEL ENCOURAGED BY THE "APPROVAL" GIVEN TO ANTI-SEMITISM BY THE UN TO EXPRESS THEIR ANTI-SEMITISM MORE FORCEFULLY. THE RESULT WOULD BE AN INCREASE IN THE HARASSMENT OF SOVIET JEWS BY THE AUTHORITIES. AS FAR AS THE CHANCES OF EMIGRATION ARE CONCERNED, OUR SOURCES FEEL THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAS NOW BEEN PROVIDED WITH ANOTHER PRETEXT TO CUT DOWN ON THE NUMBERS OF JEWS ALLOWED TO LEAVE. THE LOGIC WOULD GO: ZIONISM IS RACISM; ISRAELIS ARE ZIONISTS AND THEREFORE RACISTS; WE CANNOT ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN CONDEMNED BY THE UN.

2. OUR SOURCES TEND TO BE FAIRLY SOPHISTICATED AND ADMIT THAT
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THEY HAVE NOT FULLY THOUGHT THROUGH THE PROBLEM. THEY ALSO

REALIZE THAT UNGA RESOLUTIONS ARE HORTATORY AND HAVE NO REAL EFFECT, BUT POINT OUT THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES, ALWAYS ANXIOUSLY SEEKING SOME SORT OF INTERNATIONAL APPROVAL FOR THEIR LESS WHOLESOME POLICIES, WILL BE ABLE TO TRUMPET THE UN RESOLUTION AS SUPPORTING THEIR TREATMENT OF JEWS.

3. COMMENT: WE AGREE THAT ANY AMMUNITION THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES CAN FIND IS USEFUL TO THEM, AND EXPECT THAT THEY WILL EXPLOIT THE RESOLUTION IN THEIR PROPAGANDA. HOWEVER, WE DOUBT THAT THEY WOULD FIND IT NECESSARY TO USE THE FACT OF THE RESOLUTION AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR POLICY OF RESTRICTING EMIGRATION, SINCE THE LINE THEY ADOPT IS THAT ALL JEWS ARE FREE TO LEAVE IF THEY WISH, EXCEPT FOR SECURITY CASES. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE FIND IT WHOLLY POSSIBLE THAT ANTI-SEMITIC BUREAUCRATS (OF WHICH THERE IS NO SHORTAGE HERE) WILL INDEED USE THE EXISTENCE OF THE RESOLUTION AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO BE NASTY TO JEWS. WE DOUBT, THOUGH, THAT THIS WOULD RESULT FROM ANY POLICY CHANGE DICTATED FROM THE CENTER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JEWS, IMMIGRATION CONTROL, ZIONISM, UNGA RESOLUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: woolflhd
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW16307
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750394-0776
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751150/aaaabstg.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <10 Jun 2003 by MorefiRH, INA>; RELEASED <09 JUL 2003 by MorefiRH>; RELEASED <09 Jul 2003 by MorefiRH>; APPROVED <24 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET JEWS AND THE UN ZIONISM DECLARATION
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SHUM, CVIS, UR, UNGA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006